

**Family Portraits in Asian North American Literature:
Jean Kwok's *Girl in Translation* and Sung J. Woo's *Everything Asian***

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In this paper, the author seeks to discuss how photography, specifically family portraits, functions as a concept in diasporic literature. Jean Kwok's *Girl in Translation* (2010), recently selected by the Chinese American Library Association as Best Book, describes the journey from Hong Kong to the United States of protagonist Kimberly Chang and her mother. The particular usage of photography in Kwok's novel will be dissected through the photograph's ability to reorganize time and space for the young immigrant.

While the main literary text examined in the paper is *Girl in Translation*, the author will also compare Kwok's narrative to Korean American novel *Everything Asian* (2009). Sung J. Woo's *Everything Asian* treats photography in interesting ways as well, dealing with themes of separation and diaspora. Seeking to understand the protagonist's sister, Susan and her nostalgia, the author will focus on the brief appearance of the only photograph Susan receives from her best friend in Korea. In addition, the protagonist, David, and his battle with discrepancies between the father in the photograph and his father in America are juxtaposed against Kimberly Chang's memory of her father through a family portrait.

Ultimately, through studying both texts, the author hopes to reveal how photography as rhetoric informs readers of the ways in which photographic technology and narrative have been adapted into Chinese Overseas Literature. Stemming from a rich tradition of photographs and narrative beginning in the nineteenth century, the author will illuminate how the reconception of time and space in Chinese Overseas Literature has been inspired by the idea of photography.